



Family Planning TIMELINE

With more than 35 years of experience, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has long been the world leader in supporting voluntary family planning programs in the developing world. By enabling women and couples to have the number of children they want and helping them space their children three to five years apart, family planning has markedly improved maternal and child health.

Before 1965

After passing the Foreign Assistance Act in 1961, Congress authorizes research on family planning and population issues, including the provision of family planning information to couples who request it.

1963

Addressing the World Food Congress, President Kennedy recognizes that rapid population growth in under-developed countries has become a serious concern. It is "too often the highest where hunger is already the most prevalent."

1965 - 1969

In 1965, President Johnson declares that he will "seek new ways to use our knowledge to help deal with the explosion in world population and the growing scarcity of world resources."

1965

USAID population and reproductive health program begins.

The United States government adopts a plan to reduce birth rates in developing countries through its War on Hunger and investments in family planning programs.

1966

Congress amends the Food for Peace Act to authorize USAID to use funds to manufacture and distribute medical supplies, including contraceptives.

1968

With strong bipartisan support, Congress allots foreign assistance for family planning.

USAID makes its first purchase of contraceptives for distribution in developing countries.

1969

President Nixon describes population growth as "one of the most serious challenges to human destiny in the last third of this century."

The Office of Population is established to provide leadership, initiative, coordination, technical guidance, and assistance in developing and conducting population/family planning activities.

End of the 1960s

USAID takes a leadership role in providing condoms and contraceptives to developing countries.

1970s

USAID sponsors pilot projects and develops community-based distribution systems that bring family planning information and services door to door.

1972

USAID's Office of Population begins supporting reproductive health training and international surveys, such as the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). DHS are large national household surveys that provide data for program monitoring and evaluation.

1973

The Helms amendment to the 1961 Foreign Assistance Act prohibits USAID from promoting or funding abortion.

1974

President Ford tells the World Population Conference in Bucharest that how the world copes with its burgeoning population is "vital to the future of mankind."

1980s

Family planning programs expand to address such critical issues as maternal/child health and population and the environment.

1982

USAID issues a policy paper stating that family planning programs will be based on fundamental principles of voluntarism and informed choice.

1984

President Reagan announces the "Mexico City policy," a regulation that prohibits non-U.S., nongovernmental organizations receiving USAID population assistance funding (either directly or through sub-awards) from using their own or other non-USAID funds to provide or promote abortion as a family planning method.

End of 1980s

USAID recognizes a "resource gap" between the cost of population programs and donor/public sector funding. USAID engages the private sector to meet the growing need.

1990s

USAID stresses quality of life issues, including women's needs, and also recognizes the need for male involvement in family planning. As the decade progresses, young people's needs also receive increasing attention.

1993

President Clinton rescinds the Mexico City policy.

1993

USAID and its cooperating agencies spearhead Maximizing Access and Quality (MAQ), an initiative to improve service delivery and better serve clients.

1995

USAID launches its five-year FOCUS on Young Adults reproductive health program.

1998

Congress enacts the Tiahrt amendment reaffirming and elaborating voluntary standards for family planning projects.

1999

World population tops 6 billion.

2000s

The Office of Population & Reproductive Health (Pop/RH) becomes part of the newly established Bureau for Global Health. The focus of Pop/RH work remains constant but there are new emphases on contraceptive security and combating HIV/AIDS through family planning. Male involvement and, through the new YouthNet program, the reproductive health needs of adolescents and young adults remain important program areas.

2000

USAID announces a policy recognizing female genital cutting as "a harmful practice that violates the health and human rights of women and hinders development."

2001

President Bush reinstates the Mexico City policy. The policy does not restrict organizations from providing post-abortion care or from treating injuries or illnesses caused by legal or illegal abortions.

2003

New guidelines update USAID's 1998 *Programmatic Technical Guidance* on integrating family planning and maternal/child health with services for preventing HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. The guidelines include new information about effective integration of family planning into HIV programs and HIV counseling and services into family planning programs.

A History of Achievement (Continued)

- USAID works to improve contraceptive security. Contraceptive security exists when every person is able to choose, obtain, and use high-quality contraceptives whenever she or he wants them.
- To increase access to family planning and reproductive health services, USAID introduced such innovations as door-to-door distribution, mobile clinic services, and employee-based health care programs.
- USAID programs have trained networks of midwives, healers, and traditional birth attendants to provide family planning services. These networks increase the quality of family planning/reproductive health services and their availability.
- Private sector initiatives have expanded contraceptive social marketing, pursued joint projects with commercial providers, worked with media and entertainment industries in communication campaigns, and encouraged employers to include family planning in health benefits packages.
- USAID helps governments review policies, restrictive or unnecessary regulations, and product bans that are barriers to private sector involvement in offering family planning/reproductive health services.



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Family Planning T i m e l i n e



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USAID Family Planning and Reproductive Health Program

A History of Achievement

- Since USAID's family planning program began in 1965, the average number of children per family in the developing world (excluding China) has dropped from 6 to 4.
- USAID provides 35 to 40 percent of donor-provided contraceptives to the developing world and supplies nearly 30 family planning programs in 20 countries with technical and logistical support.
- Contraceptive use has increased in many parts of the world. In Brazil, a country that has "graduated" from USAID family planning assistance, contraceptive use exceeds the 50 percent mark.
- USAID supports the Demographic and Health Surveys, the world's largest survey research effort. Since 1972, results from more than 70 countries have revolutionized our understanding of population and health dynamics.
- Support for safer and more effective family planning methods has brought many technical advances, including natural family planning methods, improved oral contraceptives, barrier methods, and NORPLANT™.